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Letter dated 5 May 2010 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the national report of Guatemala entitled "Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women in the Context of the Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals", which will serve as a basis for the national voluntary presentation my country will make during the high-level segment of the 2010 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council (see annex).

I would be grateful if this letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Council for the annual ministerial review of the high-level segment, under item 2 (c) of the provisional agenda.

(*Signed*) Jose Alberto **Briz Gutiérrez**
Deputy Permanent Representative
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 5 May 2010 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council

Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women in the Context of the Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals

Contents

Chapter		*Page*
I.	Introduction	3
II.	Status of women in Guatemala	4
III.	Situation of women and gender gaps in the context of the Millennium Development Goals	4
IV.	Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in relation to the position of women in society	9
	1. Violence against women	9
	2. Women and decision-making	10
V.	Legislation, policies and programmes addressing gender equality and empowerment of women	10
	1. Advances in legislation and institution-building	11
	2. Advances in public policies for the promotion of women's rights	13
	3. Advances in implementation of development programmes for women	15
	4. State intervention	17
VI.	Lessons learned	20
VII.	Challenges for the country	21
	Bibliography	23

I. Introduction

1. Guatemala is a country that can be described from various perspectives. Geographically, it has great biodiversity and natural riches, while at the same time it is highly vulnerable to being battered by multiple natural phenomena. It is also diverse and complex, with four peoples coexisting in its territory: Maya, Garífuna, Xinka and non-indigenous, interacting in 23 separate languages. Furthermore, as in the majority of Latin American countries, over the centuries Guatemala has attracted a broad range of immigrants coming from all over the world, who have made it their home and, for good or ill, have woven their own characteristics into the multicultural and profoundly diverse fabric of current society.

2. Politically, the country is in a post-conflict situation, with a young democracy established in 1985, when the first civilian government freely elected through the ballot box was inaugurated. Ten years later, in 1996, with the signing of the peace agreements, 36 years of internal armed conflict came to an end and a new chapter in the nation's history began. The peace agreements contain commitments basically intended to establish the rule of law in Guatemala, to build and strengthen democracy and the possibility of broad participation by the people in national affairs, but above all, to overcome the profound social exclusion and social, economic, cultural and political inequality that characterized the country for centuries, affecting women and the indigenous and rural populations most intensively.

3. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), adopted in 2000, substantially coincide with various themes and objectives contained in the peace agreements (table 1); in addition, they have the advantage of describing progress in development and monitoring of national efforts through targets and measurable indicators that are time-bound and can be compared with other countries.

Table 1
Thematic correspondence between the peace agreements and the Millennium Development Goals

	MDG						
Peace agreements	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*
Agreement on the Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples		X	X				
Agreement on Socio-Economic Aspects and the Agrarian Situation	X	X	X		X	X	X
Agreement on the Resettlement of Population Groups Uprooted by the Armed Conflict			X				
Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights			X				
Agreement on the Strengthening of Civilian Power and the Role of the Armed Forces in a Democratic Society		X	X				
Agreement on Constitutional Reforms and the Electoral Regime		X	X				
Agreement on the Basis for the Legal Integration of the URNG	X						X
Agreement on the Implementation, Compliance and Verification Timetable for the Peace Agreements	X	X	X	X	X		X

Source: SEGEPLAN, 2010.

4. From 1986 to the present, but in particular since the signing of the peace agreements, successive governments have undertaken a range of actions intended to implement those agreements and the Millennium Development Goals. Those actions have been documented in the reports that Guatemala has already presented to the international community (2001 and 2006) as well as the third country report that will be submitted in September 2010 to the United Nations General Assembly.

5. Nevertheless, it is recognized that in the case of Guatemala both the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and the implementation of the peace agreements necessitate, above all, a commitment to reduce the inequality, the exclusion and the discrimination on the basis of geography, ethnicity or gender that persists. Given this scenario, in 2008 the Government of Guatemala offered to make a voluntary presentation to the United Nations Economic and Social Council on the progress that has been made in reducing gender inequalities and in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The Government of President Álvaro Colom reiterates this offer and expresses its gratitude to the Council in advance for the possibility of sharing this voluntary presentation.

II. Status of women in Guatemala

6. As in other countries, the status, conditions and position of women in Guatemala are determined by social, political and economic factors and cultural models reflecting inequalities, inequities and hierarchies that are the result of an historical process which relates to patterns, norms and practices that have shaped the roles assigned to women and men in society and which has led to a situation that systematically disadvantages women.

7. In the case of Guatemala, phenomena of ethnic discrimination and geographical exclusion occur on top of and compound gender discrimination, resulting in wide-ranging and structural limitations on the enjoyment by women of civic rights and the realization of their potential. This context, which has been outlined above in only general terms, fully justifies an all-out effort to guarantee equal opportunity and reduce the gaps between the sexes and between women of different ethnic backgrounds. These goals are set forth primarily in the National Policy for the Advancement and Integrated Development of Women (2000-2023),[1] which is linked with other national and international instruments, such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals, as will be described in the second part of this document.

III. Situation of women and gender gaps in the context of the Millennium Development Goals

8. The data available for the last two decades (1990-2010) show that Guatemalan women have made some strides forward in spite of the adverse conditions which have prevailed and, in particular, the periods of crisis. This progress includes an increase in the number of women registered to vote, the number of women candidates for elected office, the number of women becoming involved in public

[1] The policy was formulated in 2000 and achievement of the targets of the Equal Opportunity Plan is projected for 2023.

life, and the number of indigenous and rural women taking part in the political process. Nonetheless, visible and invisible barriers persist to the participation of women on an equal footing in decision-making affecting their communities and country, a situation that constitutes a major impediment to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

9. Table 2 illustrates how in the space of about two decades the status of women has evolved in relation to the Millennium Development Goals. As can be seen, there is a preponderance of indicators with the symbol "✓", signifying progress ranging from "slight" to "moderate" for the different disaggregated groups. Indicators with the "×" sign show a downward trend and, consequently, require greater attention, which does not imply that those for which positive results have been achieved will be ignored.

Table 2
Trends in selected indicators, Millennium Goals Situation of Women 1990-2010

Interpretation:
- ✓ Indicates an upward movement of more than 1% in an indicator.
- 0 Indicates a variation of between 0 and 1%.
- ✗ Indicates a downward movement of more than 1% in an indicator.
- n/a Indicates that no disaggregated data are available for this indicator.
- - Indicates that the data have not been disaggregated.

Millennium Development Goals and Targets	Indicators	All women	All men	Indigenous women	Non-indigenous women	Indigenous men
Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger						
Target 1B: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people	1.5 Employment-to-population ratio[a]	0	0	0	0	0
	1.6 Proportion of employed people living below $1 (PPP) per day[a]	✓	0	✓	0	✗
	1.7 Proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment[a]	✗	0	✗	✗	✗
Target 1C: Halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	1.8 Prevalence of underweight children under-five years of age[b]	0	0	0	0	0
	1.9 Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption[b]	✗	✗	n/a		
Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education						
Target 2A: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling	2.1 Net enrolment ratio in primary education[c]	✓	✓	n/a		
	2.2 Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach last grade of primary[c]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.3 Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds, women and men[c]	n/a		✓	✓	✓
Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women						
Target 3A: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015	3.1 Ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education[c]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3.2 Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector[c]	0	0	✗	0	0
	3.3 Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament[d]	0	-	✗	0	-
Goal 4: Reduce under-five child mortality						
Target 4A: Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate	4.1 Under-five mortality rate[b]	✓	✓	n/a		
	4.2 Infant mortality rate[b]	✓	✓	n/a		
	4.3 Proportion of 1 year-old children immunized against measles[e]	✓	✓	n/a		
Goal 5: Improve maternal health						
Target 5A: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio	5.1 Maternal mortality ratio[b]	✓	-	✓	✓	-
	5.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel[b]	✓	-	✓	✓	-
Target 5.B: Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health	5.3 Contraceptive prevalence rate[b]	✓	-	✓	✓	-
	5.4 Adolescent birth rate[b]	✓	-	✓	✓	-
	5.5 Antenatal care coverage (at least one visit and at least four visits)[b]	✓	-	✓	✓	-
Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases						
Target 6A: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS	6.1 HIV prevalence among population aged 15-24 years[e]	✗	✗	n/a		

Source:
- [a] National Institute of Statistics. 2000 and 2006 National Surveys of Living Conditions.
- [b] Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare. 2002 and 2008/2009 National Surveys of Maternal and Child Health
- [c] Ministry of Education. Education Information System, 2009.
- [d] Supreme Electoral Tribunal. Elections report, 2007.
- [e] Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare. National Centre for Epidemiology.

Non-indigenous men	Total
0	0
0	✓
✓	×
0	0
	×
	✓
✓	✓
✓	✓
✓	✓
0	✓
-	0
	✓
	✓
	✓
-	✓
-	✓
-	✓
-	✓
-	✓
	×

10. Reading across table 2 from left to right, one can see the trends in achievement of the targets. In that connection, attention is drawn to the preponderance of "✓" for the indicators relating to the goals for education, the reduction of infant mortality and the improvement of maternal health.

11. The Goals which have the greatest number of indicators showing a negative trend (marked "×") are those relating to the eradication of hunger and poverty, employment, gender equality and the empowerment of women, and the prevalence of HIV/AIDS. For the Goals relating to hunger, poverty and gender, various indicators are marked "0", indicating the existence of areas where no meaningful progress has been made or which require special attention in order to avoid a deterioration in the situation.

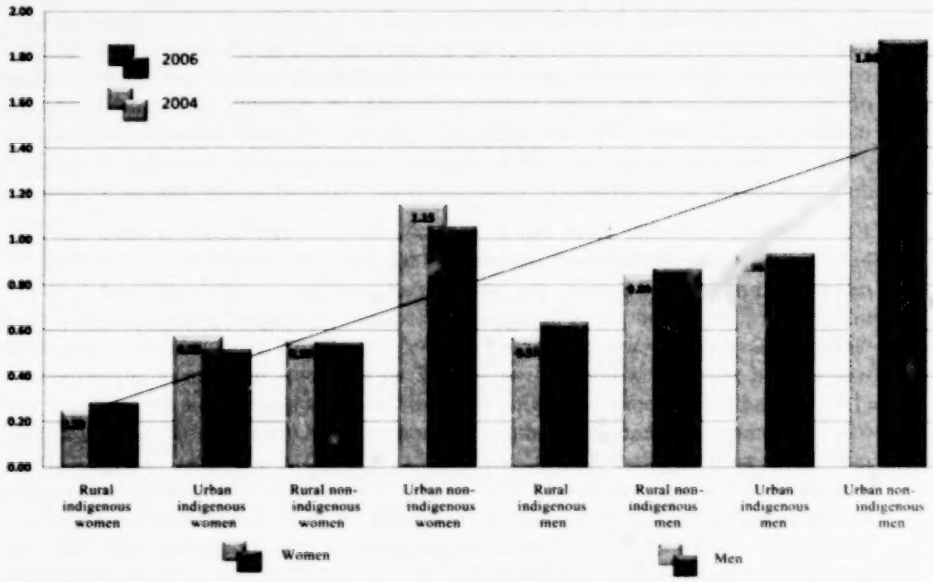
12. Reading the table from top to bottom, on the other hand, reveals the gaps between the sexes and between members of the same sex. The indicators marked "×" reflect comparisons between the sexes ("all women — all men) and between members of the same sex ("indigenous women — non-indigenous women" and "indigenous men — non-indigenous men"). As regards comparisons between all women and all men, women are worse off with respect to three of the indicators (1.7, 1.9 and 6.1) as compared with two indicators marked "×" for the men (1.9 and 6.1). A comparison between indigenous and non-indigenous women shows three indicators with negative trends, marked "×" (1.7, 3.2 and 3.3) for the former, whereas there is only one for the latter (1.7). There is also a difference with respect to downward trends for men, with worse results for indigenous men, for whom two indicators are marked "×" (1.7 and 1.6), whereas for non-indigenous men only one indicator of this kind (1.7) was reported.

13. In the light of the foregoing, the indicator that is negative across the board for the different groups is 1.7, which relates to the proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment. This suggests that not only is the availability of decent work limited, but also that people are forced to seek their own alternative forms of work in the informal sector, given the absence of social welfare programmes. The other indicators showing unsatisfactory improvement ("×") relate to dietary consumption (1.9), gender equality (3.2 and 3.3) and HIV/AIDS prevalence (6.1). The indicators showing a positive trend ("✓") fall for the most part under the goals of education and improvement of maternal health.

14. It should be emphasized that the improvements in the indicators relating to female education stand in stark contrast to the meagre progress in political participation and employment. In other words, in spite of the definite strides that have been made with respect to the education and health of girls and women, there have still been no appreciable improvements in their status in society, especially where indigenous women and women living in rural areas are concerned. This may be attributed to the fact that, both in the economic sphere and in respect of political participation, hierarchical power structures persist, limiting the full inclusion of women on an equal footing in decision-making.

15. On the other hand, it is important to note that gender inequalities do not stand in isolation in terms of their impact. Rather, by combining with other forms of inequality — in particular, those that exist between urban and rural areas and between ethnic groups — they exacerbate the disadvantages for certain population groups (see figure 1).

Figure 1
Income-to-population ratio. Employed persons between the ages of 15 and 65 by sex and ethnic affiliation



Source:
2004 ENEI.
2006 ENCOVI.

16. On the bottom rung of the income ladder in relation to the size of the population represented are indigenous women living in rural areas. In other words, the fact of living in a rural area and ethnicity compound gender inequalities. This is clear when one observes that, after non-indigenous men living in urban areas, non-indigenous women living in urban areas have the highest incomes.

17. An added consideration is the wage gap between genders, which continues to be wide in Guatemala. For every quetzal (unit of national currency) earned by a man, a woman will earn 63 centavos in urban areas and 69 centavos in rural areas, that is, 37 or 31 centavos less than a man, depending on place of residence.

18. Looking specifically at certain targets and indicators, significant gaps are also apparent. For example, in connection with Target 1.B, "Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people", the employment-to-population ratio indicator shows that under half of working-age women (41.19 per cent) are employed, compared with over three quarters of working-age men (76.52 per cent).[2] It should be noted that this figure does not take account of the quality of employment.

19. Guatemala is making progress towards Target 2.A, "Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of

[2] INE-ENCOVI, 2006.

primary schooling", both overall and among boys and girls considered individually. The same trend is apparent with the target relating to child mortality (Target 4.A).

20. With regard to Goal 5: Improve maternal health, there has been an improvement in some indicators, particularly the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel, the contraceptive prevalence rate and antenatal care coverage and the targets set may be achieved if the necessary action is taken. However, according to National Maternal and Child Health Surveys (ENSMI), the number of births attended by health personnel varies significantly between indigenous women (30 per cent) and non-indigenous women (70 per cent), as does the use of contraceptives, at 40.2 per cent for indigenous women and 63 per cent for non-indigenous women.[3]

21. A particular concern for the country is the growth in cases of HIV/AIDS in the 15-24 age group according to 2008 figures, and the significant differential between men and women in terms of prevalence, with 15 per 100,000 for men and 20 per 100,000 for women.[4]

IV. Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in relation to the position of women in society

22. This chapter dwells on the status of women in society, in other words, their position in the social hierarchy and the power structure. The distinguishing features of this status in Guatemala include the social problem of violence against women and women's participation in politics.

1. Violence against women

23. No analysis of gender equality and the empowerment of women would be complete without an examination of violence, which affects women's lives, opportunities for development and economic, social, political and physical independence. Violence against women is connected with discrimination and restriction of women's right to life, equality before the law and in the family, physical and mental health, fair and proper conditions of employment, non-exposure to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment and freedom and personal safety.[5]

24. Violence takes a number of forms, from harassment, prolonged abuse, psychological pressure and physical and sexual violence to the extreme of femicide.[6] The modern manifestation of violence against women in Guatemala is a product of social indifference, a limited institutional response capacity and the effects of almost four decades of internal armed conflict.

[3] ENSMI, 1995, 2002 and 2008/2009.

[4] National Epidemiological Centre, Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare.

[5] Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (2009). Ni una más. Del dicho al hecho: ¿cuánto falta por recorrer? Chile.

[6] Aguilar, Ana Leticia (2005). Femicidio ... la pena capital por ser mujer. En: Diálogo no. 44. FLACSO-Guatemala.

25. Available figures for 2001 to 2009 indicate a total of 4,602 cases of women meeting violent deaths (222 in 2001 to 720 in 2009).[7] Most of the cases are concentrated in and around the capital and in population centres where most of the inhabitants are non-indigenous (the south, south-east and north of the country).

2. Women and decision-making

26. The status of women cannot be explained without reference to their involvement in making the decisions that affect society. Women's opinion is important, whether within the family or in the public sphere. However, for many reasons, women continue to have little opportunity to take part or to achieve decision-making positions.

27. In the case of Guatemala, figures relating to political participation do not take account of the many ways in which women are involved in various forums. For example, the Congress of the Republic has seen a very gradual rise from 7 per cent in the period 1986-1990 to 12 per cent in 2008. The percentage of women in local government is also very small. As an example, in the most recent general election (2007), women's representation was 1.8 per cent in municipal councils (333 in total) and 5.84 per cent in municipal corporations (4,035 in total).

28. The above notwithstanding, one encouraging statistic is the opportunity presented by the reform of the National System of Urban and Rural Development Councils.[8] In 2009, there were 190 women (53 indigenous women) and 861 men serving on the Departmental Development Councils (CODEDE).[9] Although these forums have encouraged more organization and involvement of women from rural areas at the various levels of the System, efforts so far fall short of guaranteeing gender equity and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

V. Legislation, policies and programmes addressing gender equality and the empowerment of women

29. In the recent past, the country had seen a number of phases in the handling of women's rights. In the 1960s and 1970s, the view was predominantly one of women as "beneficiaries" of development, and as such, invisible as citizens and even more invisible as targets of a policy. They were simply seen as the recipients of aid projects. In the 1980s, these concepts were altered, and women came to be seen as citizens with rights. This phase coincided with the process of transition to democracy that Guatemala underwent in the middle of that decade. It also coincided with what was happening at the international level, evident in instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention of Belém do Pará (both signed and ratified by Guatemala), the

[7] National Civil Police, in basic principles for the formulation of a strategy to counter femicide in Guatemala. Commission on Femicide, Guatemala City, December 2007 and National Civil Police, directorate for planning, strategy and institutional development, for figures for 2008 and 2009.

[8] The System is in fact subject to a series of three Acts seeking to promote citizens' involvement, social auditing and community organization. They are the Municipal Code (Decree No. 11-2002), the Decentralization Act (Decree No. 14-2002) and the Urban and Rural Development Councils Act (Decree No. 12-2002).

[9] SEGEPLAN, Departmental Delegations Unit, 2010.

United Nations International Conference on Population and Development (1994) and the successive World Conferences on Women, particularly the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995).

30. The milestones in the response of Guatemala to women's demands for greater gender equity are listed below:

I. Advances in legislation and institution-building

31. The first milestone to mention is the establishment in 1981 of the National Office for Women's Affairs, attached to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. The 1990s brought the establishment of other institutions including the Office for the Defence of Women's Rights in the Office of the Human Rights Procurator (1994), the Office for the Defence of Indigenous Women's Rights (1999), the Presidential Secretariat for Women (2000) and the National Coordinating Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women (2000).

32. In the context of the peace process,[10] opportunities opened up to stimulate the modern women's movement in Guatemala. Until that time, women's organizations had been concentrated in the capital city and led by non-indigenous women, many of them professionals. With the signing of the peace agreements, the National Women's Forum was established (1997). Its structure incorporated representation for women of all language communities, helping to promote organization at community, municipal, departmental and rural levels, widening the agenda of gender-related demands on a basis of diversity of ethnicity, culture and other life experiences.

33. In the second half of the 1990s, women formed organized alliances with the Congress of the Republic, culminating in legislation which forms a normative framework, although still an inadequate one, for the tackling of key social problems such as violence against women, women's sexual and reproductive rights, involvement of the citizen and the elimination of racism and discrimination (see table 3).

Table 3

Chronological list of laws and policies for the advancement of women, 1982-2008

Date	Proposals, laws, policies
1982	Approval of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
1985	Inclusion of the principle of freedom and gender equality in the Constitution of the Republic (art. 4)
1994	Approval of the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women
1996	Women's agenda included in the Peace Agreements, mainly in the Agreement on Socioeconomic Aspects and the Agrarian Situation and the Strengthening of Civil Society[a]

[10] The peace agreements, particularly the Agreement on Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Agreement on Social and Economic Aspects and the Agrarian Situation, contain a substantial agenda advocating women's social, economic, cultural and political rights.

Date	*Proposals/laws/policies*
1999	Act on the Dignity and Integral Advancement of Women, together with amendments to the Civil Code[b]
2000	Policy for the Advancement and Development of Women and Equal Opportunities Plan 2001-2006, an instrument which brings together a decade of inputs from women's organizations and State bodies[c]
2001	Ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Legislative Decree No. 11-2002 of 19 May 2002) and approval of the Social Development Act (Decree No. 42-2001)
2002	Development Councils Act, Decree 11-2002. Municipal Code (Decree No. 12-2002) and Decentralization Act (Decree No. 14-2202) which provides for the representation of women at municipal, departmental, regional and national levels
2002	Plan of Action for the Full Participation of Guatemalan Women 2002-2012. Drawn up by the National Women's Forum and SEPREM
2003	National Languages Act. This Act gives monolingual rural women access to justice in their own language (Decree No. 19-2003)
2003	Act on the Comprehensive Protection of Children and Adolescents. This provides protection against illegal trafficking, abduction, sale and trade in children and adolescents (Decree No. 27-2003)
2004	National Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women — PLANOVI 2004-2014 (CONNAPREVI)
2005	Act on Universal and Equitable Access to Family Planning Services and Their Integration in the National Reproductive Health Programme (Decree No. 87-2005)
2005	Peace Agreements Framework Act (Decree No. 52-2005), which provides for the representation of women in the National Council for the Peace Agreements
2008	Policy for Gender Equity in Higher Education — IUMUSAC/USAC
2008	Act against Femicide and Other Forms of Violence against Women
	Act against Sexual Violence, Exploitation and Trafficking in Persons
2009	Regulations for the Implementation of the Act on Universal and Equitable Access to Family Planning Services

Source: Compiled on the basis of data from SEGEPLAN, 2010.

[a] Although not binding, the peace agreements were a milestone in crafting and building a consensus around proposals in support of women, whereby the State guarantees their rights and promotes conditions conducive to their development.

[b] For example, the change in representation of married couples who, since 1992, can be represented by either spouse and not just the man. Mention should also be made of legislative initiatives on such topics as ethnic discrimination, prohibition of compulsory military service and sexual harassment.

[c] The proposal by the National Office for Women's Affairs (ONAM) (1990) and inputs from the work done by the First Lady's Social Work Secretariat (SOSEP), ONAM and an Advisory Council (1997-1998), proposals by the National Women's Forum in the areas of economic and social development, legal affairs, civil and political participation by women, the consultation of thousands of women throughout the country by the National Women's Forum and other women's organizations following the signing of the Peace Agreements.

34. One of the reasons why women, despite achieving higher levels of education and greater access to services in the past few decades, have still not managed to change their status and participation in society substantially, lies in the fact that the legislative reforms that would open up the political arena to women, at both local and national levels, have yet to be approved. These include reforms of the Elections and Political Parties Act advocated by women's organizations since 1997, which seek to institutionalize affirmative action to promote greater participation of women in elective office.

2. *Advances in public policies for the promotion of women's rights*

35. As has been noted, the implementation of policies for the advancement of Guatemalan women has in the past two decades been linked to a number of converging factors, namely: the actions developed by organized groups of women, increased democratization, the signing of the Peace Agreements and advances at the international level embodied in specific instruments. These synergies have underpinned a basic platform of State-led action designed to improve the situation, status and position of Guatemalan women.

36. The most significant advance is the National Policy for the Advancement and Integral Development of Guatemalan Women and the Equal Opportunities Plan 2001-2006, framed between 1997 and 2000, evaluated in 2007 and updated to remain in effect until 2023. It sets out the positions expressed in the course of the consultation conducted by the National Women's Forum (1997), other women's social organizations and governmental bodies like the National Office for Women's Affairs.

37. A further significant advance in this Policy was the incorporation of the Coordinated Agenda for Maya, Garífuna and Xinka Women (2007), which resulted, in particular, in the explicit mainstreaming of topics relating to cultural identity and ethnic and racial discrimination, which had long been cast aside. In its current version (2010), the Policy provides for 12 lines of strategic action, which in several ways tie in exactly with the Millennium Development Goals (see table 4).

38. In addition, the Policy harmonizes, coordinates and gives concrete expression to the content of the Act on Dignity and Integral Advancement of Women in the light of the principles and areas of concern set out in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, to which the State is already committed. This is a new development with features that make it stand out as a genuine State policy which has stood the test of time through various government administrations as a permanent link with women's social organizations.

Table 4

Links between the National Policy for the Advancement and Integral Development of Women and the Millennium Development Goals

Pillars of the National Policy for the Advancement and Integral Development of Women	*MDG*							
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*
Economic development	X		X					
Natural resources							X	
Educational equity		X	X					
Health equity				X	X	X		
Eradication of violence against women			X					

Pillars of the National Policy for the Advancement and Integral Development of Women	*MDG*							
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*
Legal equity			X					
Racism and discrimination			X					
Cultural development		X	X					
Equity in employment	X	X	X					
Institutional mechanisms			X					X
Socio-political participation			X					
Cultural identity of Maya, Garífuna and Xinka women		X	X					

Source: Based on data from SEPREM National Policy for the Advancement and Integral Development of Women, 2008-2023, and official list of MDGs.

39. Moreover, it should be mentioned that, in the cross-cutting and sectoral public policy agenda developed over the past decade, some 50 per cent (22 out of 44) of policies explicitly include guidelines and actions to promote gender and ethnic equality, in keeping with the women's rights framework.

Table 5
Cross-cutting and sectoral policies that include guidelines on gender and ethnic equity

	Policies in force	*No*
Cross-cutting	National Policy for the Advancement and Integral Development of Women 2008-2023	9
	Public Policy for Coexistence and Elimination of Racism and Discrimination	
	Public Policy for the Comprehensive Protection of Children and Adolescents	
	National Policy for Comprehensive Rural Development	
	National Decentralization Policy	
	National Food and Nutritional Security Policy	
	National Human Rights Education Policy	
	National Human Rights Policy	
	Social Development and Population Policy	
Sectoral	National Policy for the Development of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises	13
	Policy and Plan for Gender Equity in Higher Education 2006-2014	
	Policy for the Protection, Assistance and Care of the Guatemalan Community Living Abroad	
	Agricultural Policy 2008-2012	
	National Forestry Policy	
	Education Policies 2008-2012	
	Public Policy against Trafficking in Persons and Comprehensive Protection of Victims	

Policies in force	*No.*
National Policy against Addiction and Illicit Trafficking in Drugs	
Environmental Management Framework Policy	
National Integrated Water Management Policy	
National Cultural and Sports Policies	
National Intangible Heritage Policy	
Public Book, Reading, Writing and Library Policies	
Total	**22**

Source: Based on data from SEGEPLAB, 2010.

40. The convergence of various factors, including the National Policy for the Promotion and Integral Development of Women (PNPDIM), a set of related cross-cutting and transversal policies and the programmes under way, offers an opportunity to lay the foundations for the institutionalization of actions to promote the integral development of women. Further impetus is provided by the agenda set by the Millennium Development Goals and by current developments in State management through or on the basis of the public policies of the administration of President Álvaro Colom.

3. *Advances in the implementation of development programmes for women*

41. The establishment of a framework of institutional mechanisms and public policies for women goes hand in hand with the development of plans, programmes and projects calculated to create conditions for reducing the gaps between men and women, and among women in respect of health, education, participation and the right to a life free of violence.

Table 6
Programmes linked to implementation of PNPDIM and MDGs, 2000-2010

PNPDIM pillars	*MDG*	*Programmes linked to the implementation of the Policy and the MDGs*
Equitable Economic and Productive Development	1	National Emergency and Economic Recovery Programme-PNERE Prorural
		National Programme for Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Development
		"My Community Produces"
		Programme of support for productive and agricultural restructuring
		"My Family Progresses"
Natural resources, Land and Housing	7	Programme on Water as a Source of Peace
		Programme on Drinking Water and Rural Sanitation — PASRURAL
		National Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Programme
		Programme for the Reduction of Environmental Vulnerability and Degradation

PNPDIM pillars	*MDG*	*Programmes linked to the implementation of the Policy and the MDGs*
		Convention on Biological Diversity Protected Areas Work Plan — National Implementation Support Partnership (NISP)
Culturally relevant educational equity	2, 3	"My Family Progresses" Programme
		Accelerated Primary Education Programme (PEAC)
		Education Centres for Development Programme (NUFED)
		Solidarity Scholarships Programme
		Open Schools Programme
		Programme for the Universalization of Multicultural and Intercultural Bilingual Education in the National Education System
Equity in the development of culturally relevant comprehensive health care	4, 5, 6	"My Family Progresses" Programme
		National Reproductive Health Programme (PNSR)
		National STD/HIV/AIDS Programme (PNS)
		AIDS and Drug Addiction Prevention Programme (MINEDUC)
		Programme for Accessibility to Medicine
		National Vectors Programme, Malaria Subprogramme
		National Tuberculosis Programme
		National Programme to Reduce Chronic Malnutrition
		Programme on Acute Respiratory Diseases (IRAS) and
		Water-borne and Food-borne Diseases (ETAS)
		National Programme to Reduce Maternal and Neonatal Mortality
		National Immunization Programme
		Community Day-care Centre Programme
Eradication of violence against women	3, 5	Programme for the Prevention and Eradication of Domestic Violence (PROPEVI)
		Programme for the Protection and Shelter of Children and Adolescents
		Programme of Integral Day Care Centres for Women Survivors of Violence (CAIMUS)
Equity and identity in cultural development	2, 3	Open Schools Programme
Equity in employment		National Emergency and Economic Recovery Programme
	1, 2, 3	Prorural Programme
		"My Community Produces"
Cultural identity of Maya, Garifuna and Xinka women	3	Open Schools Programme

Source: National Policy for the Advancement and Integral Development of Women 2008-2023, Official List of Millennium Development Goals, 2008.

42. It should be noted that not all the programmes listed in table 6 necessarily provide for actions explicitly oriented towards gender and ethnic equity. However, the nature of the measures they propose and the focus of programmes on areas inhabited predominantly by poor and extremely poor indigenous people implicitly contribute to higher levels of equity and active involvement by women, either as target groups or as direct agents of actions designed for more extensive population groups. This is more clearly demonstrated by social expenditure for 2006-2009 in areas with a highly predominant (between 75 and 97 per cent) and moderately predominant (between 58 and 65 per cent) indigenous population, where social expenditure on health and education increased by 26.2 per cent and 27.9 per cent respectively.[11]

4. State intervention

43. Since the signing of the Peace Agreements, the efforts of the State of Guatemala have been directed towards reducing poverty, food security, educational coverage and reducing maternal and infantile mortality. Progress has been slow, however, for a number of reasons, namely: institutional weakness of the State; excessively low tax revenue, which averaged 11.3 per cent over the past 10 years (2000-2009) and 10.4 per cent in 2009.[12] This is due in part to a traditional reluctance of the wealthiest sectors of society to provide more resources for the country's development, insufficient transparency in public management, and a lack of focus in programmes and actions.

44. Under poverty reduction strategies,[13] various Government offices have carried out production programmes and projects designed to provide an income to women, particularly those living in extreme poverty in rural areas, in order to give an economic stimulus both to them and to their communities. In this vein, in the Government of President Álvaro Colom, the Council for Social Cohesion promotes sector and programme coordination on the basis of local needs, giving priority to municipalities with the highest rates of poverty and extreme poverty. The main programmes in terms of geographical coverage and target population are: "My Family Progresses", Open Schools, Solidarity Exchange, "My Community Produces" and Solidarity Scholarships. These programmes underpin a process of institutionalization of a State-led policy of social protection which is increasingly taking on a more universal character.

45. The review of important findings in the 2006 Millennium Development Goals progress report is another noteworthy development underlying the implementation of these programmes by President Colom's administration. The progress report also identified cost-effective policy measures, on the basis of which several of the programmes of the Council for Social Cohesion are designed.

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[11] SEGEPLAN, internal working paper, 2010.

[12] Net tax revenue of central Government according to the Tax Administration.

[13] More recently updated data on poverty and gender were not available for this document, but fresh country data on poverty are currently being compiled.

Table 7
Linkage between cost-effective public policy measures and programmes that contribute to the progress of the Millennium Development Goals

*Cost-effective public policies**	*Programmes implemented*
Children under the age of 5 with access to **GROWTH MONITORING**	"My Family Progresses" conditional cash transfer programme/Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance
Pregnant women with access to **PRENATAL CARE**	"My Family Progresses" conditional cash transfer programme/Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance
Mothers who have given birth with access to **POST-NATAL CARE**	"My Family Progresses" conditional cash transfer programme/Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance
Rural (urban) households with well or tap (access to **PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY**)	"Water as a Source of Peace" programme
Rural (urban) households with **LATRINE** (access to wastepipe)	"Water as a Source of Peace" programme
Access to **HEALTH-CARE SERVICES**, clinics, health-care centres and hospitals	Specific measures adopted by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance (Provision of services free of charge, provision of ambulances, 24-hour care)
Access to **SCHOOLS** (urban/rural)	Specific measures adopted by the Ministry of Education (Provision of services free of charge)
Primary school students receiving **ACADEMIC INCENTIVES**	Specific measures adopted by the Ministry of Education (loans, grants, scholarships)
Parents' educational level (+**parental illiteracy-children's education**)	National Literacy Council
Mothers who have given birth with access to the **BREASTFEEDING** programme	"My Family Progresses" conditional cash transfer programme/Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance
Households with **ELECTRICITY**	Infrastructure improvements, Council for Social Cohesion

* Second Progress Report, MDGs 2006. Presidential Secretariat for Planning (SEGEPLAN).
Source: Drafted using information provided by the Council for Social Cohesion.

46. By virtue of its provision of conditional cash transfers, the "Mi Familia Progresa (My Family Progresses)" programme is the first of its kind to be

implemented in the country. Formally launched in April 2008, it is currently being administered in a total of 177 municipalities, reaching approximately 2.5 million people, 1.5 million of which are children from 0 to 15 years of age.[14] During the period 2008-2009, just over 1 billion quetzales has been invested in conditional cash transfers, which provide support for people living in poverty, particularly women, and constitute an investment in the health and education of children of both genders. It is worth noting that this programme is directly linked to the policy of free public health and education, and it has delivered positive results to date, as demonstrated by several maternal and child health and education indicators contained in the trend analysis of the Goals. The continuity and institutionalization of this kind of programme within a State social protection policy would improve the country's chances of attaining the Millennium Development Goals.

47. "Mi Comunidad Produce (My Community Produces)" is a related programme that complements the conditional transfer system by extending credits for productive activity to families in priority municipalities, mainly targeting rural women. In 2009 the programme provided 70,832 people with technical assistance to pursue productive activity and facilitated access to financing arrangements for 32,610 people, for a total amount of 100 million quetzales.

48. In addition, such programmes as the National Economic Emergency and Rehabilitation Programme and the Programme for Rural Economic Development have been designed to promote productivity and job creation, of particular importance given the repercussions of the global financial crisis. Their purpose is to enhance rural and indigenous participation in the national economy, one of their main criteria being that 80 per cent of beneficiaries must be indigenous. These programmes are also promoting women's participation by sponsoring productive projects, granting access to credits and providing technical assistance.

49. In order to address the specific demands regarding prevention of domestic violence and violence against women and treatment of the effects of such violence, the National Coordinating Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women (CONAPREVI) is implementing the National Plan for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women (PLANOVI) and establishing comprehensive care centres for female survivors of violence (CAIMUS), as stipulated by the Act against Femicide and Other Forms of Violence against Women. Similarly, the First Lady's Social Work Secretariat coordinates the Programme for the Prevention and Eradication of Domestic Violence (PROPEVI), which promotes a comprehensive, joint State-civil society approach to combating domestic violence that encompasses prevention, early detection, eradication and provision of care to family members.

50. Other programmes specifically targeting women include the National Reproductive Health Programme and the National Programme for the Prevention and Management of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIDS. The first provides prenatal and post-natal screening, family planning, detection of cervico-uterine cancer, care for safe delivery and referral of complicated pregnancies and deliveries. The second programme handles the detection of STDs and HIV,[15]

[14] "Mi Familia Progresa" website — http://www.mifamiliaprogresa.gob.gt accessed in May 2010.

[15] Chanquin, Victoria et al. *Salud sexual y reproductiva ¿Qué deseo? ¿Qué decido? Un análisis del modelo de atención de salud en Guatemala*. Guatemala, Medicus Mundi/REDNOVI, 2009.

especially in pregnant women, in order to assess the risk of mother-to-child transmission.

VI. Lessons learned

Alliances between women's organizations and public institutions: a permanent, rather than sporadic presence

51. Over the past two decades, significant, though still insufficient, progress has been made in promoting State-initiated measures to guarantee women's rights and empower them as citizens. The strategy of proposing alliances between organized women's groups and institutions for women within the executive, legislative and judicial branches of Government has been a contributing factor. Such alliances have resulted in the development of human rights-based agendas that articulate the needs and interests of local communities and of women hailing from the diverse range of peoples that make up Guatemalan society. These agendas, expressed by the female political actors themselves, provide a guiding framework for bolstering democracy and transforming the rationale behind public administration.

52. Another important achievement has been the identification of mechanisms that enable women's organizations to participate in State decision-making forums, such as the Presidential Secretariat for Women (SEPREM), the Office for the Defence of Indigenous Women's Rights (DEMI) and the National Coordinating Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women (CONAPREVI) within the National System of Urban and Rural Development Councils, municipal women's offices and bureaux that deal with specific issues.

Alliances between women and other marginalized groups

53. The inroads made by women, along with other actors such as indigenous peoples, have led to innovations in the public sphere, in the form of a new vision and new institutional models that address the demands of marginalized groups that have long gone unheeded. Those innovations include the establishment of such bodies as the Office for the Defence of Indigenous Women's Rights, the Presidential Secretariat for Women and the National Coordinating Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women. Similarly, women's emergence has entailed the implementation of rational and systematic planning and social investment models and systems that favour transparency, accountability and social auditing.

State-initiated action benefiting women creates new opportunities for participation

54. The many programmes implemented have facilitated women's efforts to organize in their communities, in line, first and foremost, with an approach aimed at meeting basic needs. However, these programmes have also contributed to a growing movement towards personal and collective empowerment that, if fully promoted, will eventually lead to greater social and political participation for women. At present, female participation at the community level has already increased and serves as a platform for networking with municipal and departmental governments as well as with other social, political and economic organizations. This improvement is an indicator of women's exercise of the right to participation, which leads to the forging of social agendas on development; the management of

community development projects; political dialogue with local, departmental, national and international actors; and the promotion of important changes to State services. For instance, the issuance of an identity document to female beneficiaries of the "My Family Progresses" programme has a concrete positive impact, both in terms of the practical use of the document, which allows women to access conditional transfers within the banking system, and in terms of its strategic value, as possession of the identity document can afford women more options for the exercise of their fundamental civil and political rights. The inclusion of more actors in the process of addressing women's needs and interests, particularly those of the most marginalized women, serves as an important lesson for the country.

Institutionalization of female representation in local governments and territories

55. Female representation in local governments has increased significantly in the past decade, owing to a legal framework, the establishment of specific institutions in the territories (women's commissions and municipal offices) and the support of international cooperation programmes. Synergy among those factors presents an opportunity for the promotion of women's policies, the provision of services and training, programme management, local political participation or influence on opportunities for participation.

Cumulative learning process in the area of public policy

56. Many of the programmes that are currently being implemented for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals stem from explicit recommendations made in the previous progress report (2006). This is in addition to experience gathered, along with national and international guidelines for the formulation of policies, programmes and legislation for the promotion of gender equity. They are also derived from the ongoing implementation of State policies in the areas of health and education, which now include better indicators for women. All these factors reflect favourably on Guatemala's potential to learn, maintain over time, and put the development agenda on the right path, even though that path is still fraught with challenges and obstacles.

VII. Challenges for the country

57. The persistence of indicators which show that women are still in an unfavourable situation makes it necessary to identify the challenges faced in promoting gender equality and empowerment of women, particularly those who face multiple disadvantages owing to conditions of poverty and exclusion.

58. It should be acknowledged that, while Guatemala is generally moving in the right direction towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and gender equity, the pace of progress is extremely slow, given the scope of the challenges still confronting the country. Nonetheless, although the official country report (2010) is still being prepared, the preliminary analyses show that it will be difficult for Guatemala to achieve on time many of the goals set for 2015.

59. As was indicated in the 2006 report, for Guatemala to accelerate the pace of implementation, it will be key to find the right combination of three elements: (a) policies that promote accelerated and inclusive economic growth; (b) a better pattern of wealth distribution among the population, which reduces the marked

historical inequities and exclusions between urban and rural areas, ethnic groups, and men and women; and (c) accelerated pursuit and expansion of policies aimed at (i) universal provision of basic services; (ii) universal social protection; (iii) empowerment of women; and (iv) combating racism and discrimination.

60. Although the current administration is committed to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and has been aggressively implementing social protection strategies in territories with the highest poverty or extreme poverty, the adverse economic climate of the past few years, combined with the historical reluctance to increase the country's tax burden, are limiting considerably the State's ability to take action to promote development. This constitutes — presently and for the next five years — the principal challenge to be overcome in the effort to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

61. However, another challenge which Guatemala faces is the technical and political consolidation needed for a more efficient and effective management of development. This entails having, in particular, national systems for policy and programme monitoring and evaluation. This process also contributes to transparency through the accountability exercise.

62. Yet another challenge in guaranteeing gender equality in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals is to give priority to those areas of action of public policies and programmes that address and transform the position of women in society through their effective empowerment. These include policies and programmes that address sexual and reproductive health and violence against women; promote freedom and economic independence of women; and eliminate the exclusion of women from areas of knowledge creation.

63. For the State, effective management of public policy brings with it the challenge of strengthening the planning system at both territorial and sectoral levels; and consolidating inter-institutional coordination mechanisms responsible for planning in order to guarantee coherence between policies and public spending. It also means continuing the efforts of alignment, harmonization and appropriation in the area of international cooperation in order to fulfil the commitments set forth in the country's policy agenda, particularly in the critical areas of concern contained in the National Policy for the Advancement and Integral Development of Women.

64. The last challenge is to mainstream women's rights into the public policy agenda, the legal framework and access to justice, the institutional framework, the organizational culture and administrative practices, to ensure that the State's response to gender inequities is comprehensive, coherent, pluralistic and sustainable.

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